

American League Votes to Add Two Teams No Later Than 1962

National League Is Expected to Take Similar Action This Month, With Cities to Be Selected Later

By JOSEPH M. SHEEHAN

In the most forthright step yet to bring about the expansion of major league baseball, the American League voted unanimously yesterday to increase its membership from eight to ten teams no later than the 1962 season.

Still wide open was the question of which cities would be added. Joe Cronin, the league president, said, "We didn't talk about specific cities at this time. That is a matter we hardly can resolve except in conjunction with the National League."

The National League is expected to hold an expansion meeting in September and most likely will also vote to expand to ten teams.

This would be in line with the action taken by the realignment committees of both major leagues at their meeting with the representatives of the proposed eight-team Continental League at Chicago on Aug. 2.

Two-Step Plan Drawn

At that meeting, the American and National League committees agreed to recommend to their full bodies a two-step plan of expansion. It provided for the admission of four Continental League cities to the established majors by 1962, if 1961 was not practicable.

The Continental League backers also received assurances that their four remaining cities would get priority consideration when further expansion seemed justified.

Shelving the multiple problems that expansion will involve, the American League reached its decision in a three-hour closed meeting at the Hotel Roosevelt, at which all of its clubs were represented.

Two resolutions were passed, as follows:

"Resolved, that the American League shall consist of ten members. Each of the two additional members shall provide and conduct a professional baseball club in such city as shall be approved by a three-quarter vote of the present members of the league."

"Resolved, that the proposed expansion of the American League to ten members shall be effective no later than Dec. 1, 1961."

The possibility of ten-club

American League operation by next season was not ruled out by Cronin. But the league president and Del E. Webb, a co-owner of the Yankees who heads the American League realignment committee, indicated that there was little chance of getting the details of expansion settled that quickly.

The realignment committee also includes J. A. W. Iglehart of Baltimore, Hank Greenberg of Chicago and George Medinger of Cleveland. This group and a fact-finding committee consisting of Bill DeWitt of Detroit, George Weiss of the Yankees and Greenberg will continue to study all aspects of expansion.

They will report back to another full league meeting that will be called "soon after the 1960 world series."

In addition to settling on the cities to be added, there must be a decision on how to stock the new teams with players, how to extend coverage under the players' pension plan and many other technical points, including indemnification of the minor leagues whose territorial rights will be affected by expansion.

Of the eight sites on the Continental League list, New York, Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Toronto and Buffalo are considered the leading candidates for immediate admission to the majors, not necessarily in that order.

Denver, Atlanta on List

The other Continental League cities are Denver and Atlanta, but the latter has virtually withdrawn from consideration.

Since the American League already is represented in New York by the Yankees, a second team here automatically would be assigned to the National League, which vacated this city with the 1958 shift of the Giants and Dodgers to California.

There was no admitted discussion yesterday of the proposal by Dan Topping, the co-owner of the Yankees, that the readmission of the National League to New York be made contingent on opening Los Angeles, the new base of the Dodgers, to the American League.